

MINUTES  
FAYSTON PLANNING COMMISSION  
January 11, 2021  
Unapproved

Members Present: Doug Day (Doug), Don Simonini (Don), Pete Ludlow (Pete), Jen Hammond (Jen); Carol Chamberlin (Carol), Rick Swanson (Rick); ZA: John Weir (JB); Public: Kaziah Haviland

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m.
2. Announcements and Agenda Modification: None
3. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting on December 14, 2020: Don moved to accept the minutes of December 14, 2020 and Pete seconded. There being no discussion, all in favor, the motion carried.
4. Liason Reports: Doug had a meeting with the Mad River Valley Trails Collaborative, which focused on the heavy trail usage over the last year. Doug noted that Ridge to Rivers is meeting later this week. Don reiterated that the Housing Coalition will be seeking a \$4,000 contribution from the three towns, with a match from the Community Fund. Don added that the Planning District is also seeking to address the issues with crosswalks in Waitsfield village in the aftermath of the tragic accident that occurred in the fall on Route 100 near the Big Picture. Several remedial options were discussed, including push-button lights, lowering the speed limit to 25 mph, bins of flags for pedestrians to use while traversing the crosswalk, and increasing police patrol. Logistics and cost play an important factor. For instance, lowering the speed limit would necessitate the Town of Waitsfield taking over the maintenance of the village stretch of Route 100. Whereas requesting an increase in police patrol would not burden the municipalities to the same degree. Rick added that the same speed concerns exist on Route 17. Members agreed that Don could address the Planning District on behalf of the PC, relaying the Planning Commission's support in addressing these safety issues in whatever fashion.
5. Presentation by Kaziah Haviland of the Housing Coalition: Kaziah was present to give an overview of some of the ways municipalities, communities, individuals, and other entities to come together to address affordable housing issues. Community members can begin to soften the housing deficit by taking small actions on their own property. Local non-profits can assist individuals in the process of creating and modifying private units and can provide financial assistance for certain projects. Actions that can happen on an individual or private level include the creation of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), participation in programs like HomeShare Vermont, adaptive reuse of structures for affordable housing, creation of deed restrictions relating to home affordability, weatherization measures, organizing volunteer networks to assist low-to-moderate income homeowners or renters on small scale projects, creation of affordable communities, and the creation of things like limited equity cooperatives. Kaziah touched on the role affordable housing developers can play with the right incentives and proper funding from other sources. Municipalities also have a large role to play. While the creation and modification

of regulations does not necessarily ensure the development of affordable units, the bylaws can either encourage or prohibit greater affordable housing options through their flexibility. Some things municipalities can explore include establishing designated growth areas, creating density bonuses for affordable housing, dedicating publicly-owned property to affordable housing, enacting inclusionary zoning where a certain percentage of units developed must be affordable, increasing public wastewater and potable water access to reduce construction cost and allow for greater density, accommodation of ADUs, tiny home and other alternative living arrangements in the bylaws, tax incentives for maintenance and rehabilitation of affordable properties, support for employer assisted housing programs, support of missing middle-housing types, and the regulation of short-term rentals which often impact the affordable housing market. With regard to funding, Kaziah noted the creation of housing trust fund with dedicated annual monies for local housing projects. These trust funds can be generated by impact fees and fees from regulating short-term rentals. These monies can be used for down payments or closing cost assistance, rental assistance such as security deposits and first/last month's rents, energy efficient retrofits, grants for affordable housing developers, and various other issues that present affordable housing obstacles. Kaziah stressed that confronting the affordable housing crisis necessitates a collaborative approach.

JB asked Kaziah what role the allowable size of an ADU could play in helping to alleviate the affordable housing crisis, if any. Kaziah said it depends on the community and who you are trying to serve. Kaziah added that a studio apartment as well as 1-2 bedroom apartments can be considered an ADU. Kaziah offered to review the land use regulations with a focus on ADUs and what might be added, removed or revised so as to make the process easier for landowners. One thing Waitsfield has done is to revise the regulations to allow for duplexes as a permitted rather than conditional use. Warren is also looking into the same. Fayston only allows for duplexes as a conditional use in all districts. Pete asked about cost of construction of ADUs generally. Kaziah said it was hard to quantify as some units are built from scratch and others just need a bathroom or kitchen in an empty space above a garage.

#### 6. Land Use Regulations: Continued review and discussion of revisions:

- *Section 4.1 (B) – Accessory Dwellings and allowable size (review JB's changes)* JB made the two required changes to Section 4.1: removing the requirement that the accessory dwelling be in an *existing* structure for administrative approval and that the allowable size for administrative approval be 900 square feet or up to 30% of the principal dwelling, *whichever is greater*. Carol reminded JB to denote the statutory reference for this change, if any. Don would like to table any additional changes to this regulation and see if there is any need to increase the 900 square feet requirement.

- *Administrative Review regulation: Consider adopting something similar to Waitsfield (wherein ZA can review and approve minor amendments to Conditional Use permits, subdivision plats and plans, or PRD/PUDs previously approved by DRB) or Warren's Section 6.1 (B) (3) (wherein ZA can approve most common boundary-line adjustments)* JB had sent out Warren's language which allows the ZA to approved certain lot-line adjustments rather than DRB. The more vast administrative review regulation of Waitsfield is not necessary given the lack of commercial

activity in Fayston. Members agreed that language akin to Warren be added into Section 7. JB will look to revise this for next meeting.

- *Section 3.7 (B) – whether to remove “or structure” from this regulation (JB is awaiting response from VLCT)* JB did finally receive a response from VLCT, but more information was requested for clarity. This will be tabled until next meeting.

- *Preliminary discussion of creating an overlay district along Route 17* – Discussion was had as to the FEMA floodway along Route 17. Ned Swanberg had no information as to when the advocacy period for FEMA to listen to municipalities for remapping will begin. Members discussed creating an overlay district along Route 17 up to German Flats Road to allow for particular uses that are currently either permitted or conditional. Carol recommended members review the Town Plan to get a better idea of the types of establishments residents are in favor of seeing along that stretch of road. Members agreed to review the Town Plan (Chapter 5 especially) and other district tables to see what uses could be added to the overlay district as either permitted or conditional for this stretch along Route 17.

7. Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

The next meeting of the Fayston Planning Commission is February 8, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.